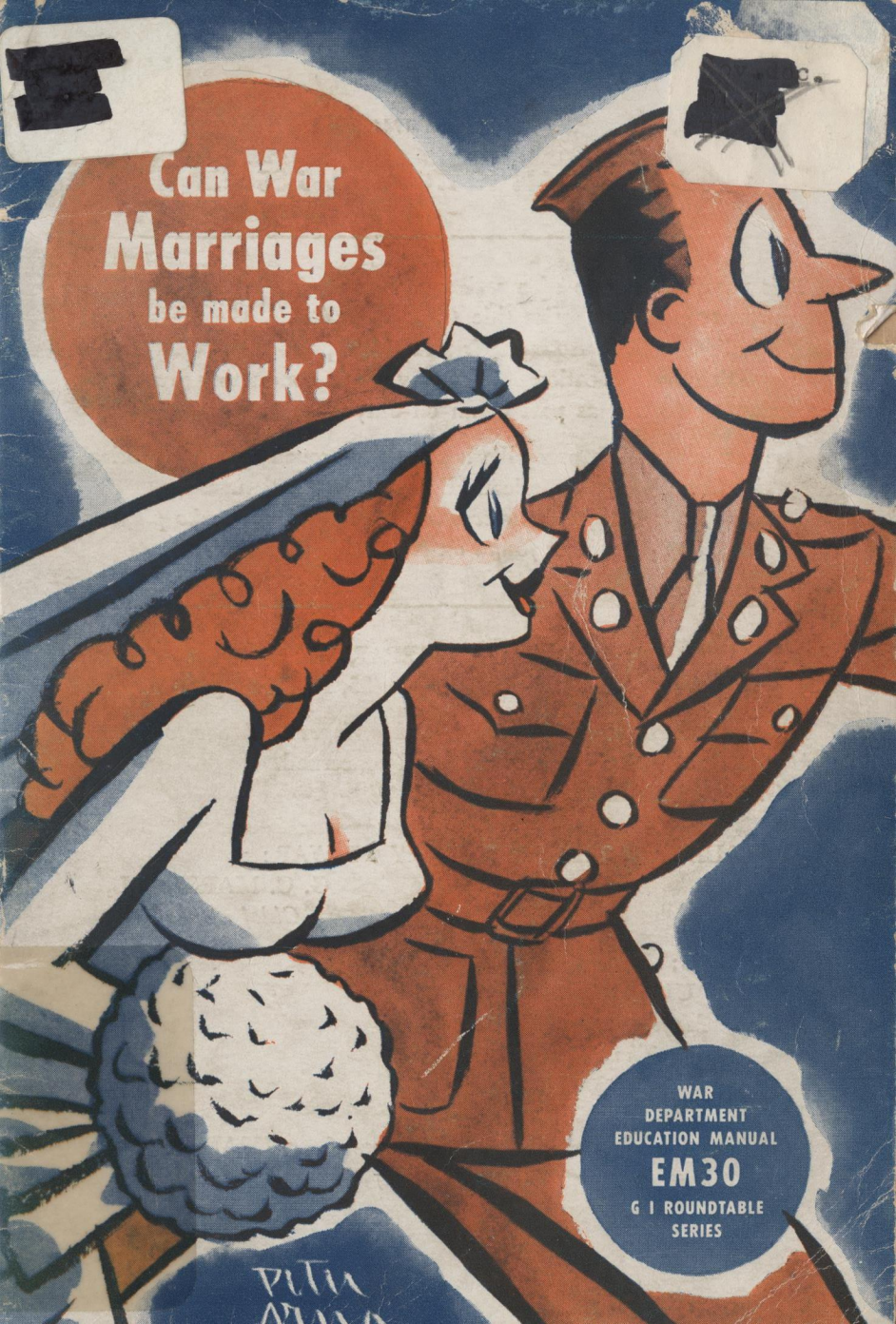
Can War Marriages be made to Work?



WAR DEPARTMENT EDUCATION MANUAL

EM30

G I ROUNDTABLE SERIES

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This pamphlet is one of a series made available by the War Department under the series title *G. I. Roundtable.* As the general title indicates, *G. I. Roundtable* pamphlets provide material which orientation and education officers may use in conducting group discussions or forums as part of an off-duty education program.

The content of each pamphlet has been approved by the Historical Service Board of the American Historical Association.

Specific suggestions for the discussion or forum leader who plans to use this pamphlet will be found on page 28.

WAR DEPARTMENT
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OFFICIAL:
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Major General,
The Adjutant General.

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CAN
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Can War Marriages Be Made To Work

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In a crowded railroad station a girl clings to her soldier sweetheart, weeping as she thinks ahead to lonely days and months.

Near a naval training center a sailor pushes a baby carriage. His young wife walks alongside him, both of them beaming with pride and pleasure in this fleeting moment of family unity.

A tired man and his equally tired wife sip their coffee in silence at a corner cafe. He is on his way home from the night shift at the war plant. She is about to punch in for her daytime stint on the drill press. This hasty meal in passing and another similar meeting in the evening make up almost the whole of their life together.

A happy young couple walk down the steps of a church under an archway of sabers. Another pair listen in a dingy office to an official mumble the words that make them man and wife. Either couple may have but a day or two together in some hotel before the husband goes back to camp, the wife to her parents or to live in a furnished room.

Juke boxes blare forth the song, "Ain't I never gonna get a girl in my arms?" A sailor sprawled on the seat of a streetcar grins at the girl across the aisle from him and reads an invitation in her smile. Teen-age girls wait on dark corners for soldier friends or stroll in the bright lights, ready to strike up friendships that may ripen into intimacy within an hour.

Somewhere a woman puts two children to bed and then reads again her husband's letter from the fighting front.

These are but a few glimpses of changes brought to courtship, marriage, and family life by the war. Most of us see only a swift series of episodes, not the whole picture, along with the rush of events.



IT STARTED RIGHT AFTER PEARL HARBOR . . .

One thing stands out, however: A vast number of American men and women have paraded to the altar since Pearl Harbor.

The march started with the first rumblings of American involvement in the war. It reached its quickest pace during the last month of 1941 and the first four months of 1942. Today, with millions of men in uniform, the peak of war marriages has passed.

Many of the thousands of "war-marriage" couples would have married, war or no war. But motives either not present at all in

peacetimes or else greatly strengthened by war emotions have influenced large numbers of them.

WHY WAR MARRIAGES?

Many war marriages are hasty marriages. Many are made while men are on leave or furlough. Often the time of the marriage is determined by the approaching end of a short leave.

Military promptness and the speed-up of work in war plants tend to hasten marriage. Entrance into service is an abrupt change of status. Why not, some argue, make an abrupt change from single to married status? If war can change life overnight, why not make the change more complete by marrying? If the Army is going to snatch you away from civilian life, why not strengthen your ties with that life by leaving a wife behind you? And for many a girl who watches the boys going away from the home town, the "dates" of the hectic hours before they go may seem the last chance for marriage.

Courtship, no matter how disguised, is competition. To the soldier marriage offers, among other advantages, a device to ward off the competition of rivals while he is away.

In war nothing is certain but uncertainty. Even an unwise marriage may give a feeling of certainty for a moment. Unconsciously it may seem to offer an escape from doubts and confusion.

Many war marriages come about through loneliness or fear of loneliness. A soldier returns to his home town on leave; his old friends are gone; many things have changed. Or a girl takes a job away from home and is separated from her family and friends. Both to the girl away from home and to the soldier on leave, marriage is an intimate relationship that seems to offer escape from loneliness. Absence makes the heart grow fonder—if there is nobody else. And there may be nobody else in time to prevent a marriage that might never have taken place under normal conditions.



The man in service hears many appeals to consider his "loved ones." The phrase is repeated in films, lectures, and pamphlets. Army life itself stimulates the thought. Does the soldier have a "loved one"? Marriage might mean a "Yes" to that question. Human beings have a way of wanting what they don't have.

Plenty of other motives, noble or sordid, may be involved. To marry a soldier is, to many girls, a patriotic thing. A girl may feel herself—and she may in fact be—a source of inspiration to her soldier husband. On the sordid side, the extreme in motives is illustrated by marriage for allotments or insurance. Cases are known

of attempts to acquire income from more than one soldier at the same time.

War has indirectly provided a marriage incentive like that of boom times when employers practically stand in line and file applications for a prospective employee. Then the problem of an income sufficient for marriage does not seem quite so difficult as it was in normal times.

A marriage may actually take place after the war period and still be a "war marriage." John and Jane, for example, may decide to postpone their marriage until after the war, but it has its roots in the war years.

WHAT PRICE WAR MARRIAGES?

Marriages in wartime are as varied as those in peacetime. Many marriages made since Pearl Harbor have sound foundations and would succeed under almost any circumstances. Other marriages, less solidly based, are dangerously shaken by the strain and stress of the war period. Some might have succeeded in peacetimes, but can't weather the storm of war. There are also marriages contracted in wartime between persons whose lack of adaptability would doom them to failure even under the best circumstances.

Even those who look at the world through the rose-colored spectacles of love know that war marriages are liable to special dangers and difficulties.

Much depends upon circumstances. For some couples, family life in wartime is not greatly different from family life in normal times. Careful plans are made for a home. The honeymoon is not a prelude to separation. Pay checks make it possible to buy furniture. Romance mellows into contentment and a baby is born.

But for others the honeymoon may be a prelude to heartache and tragedy. There are only a few brief hours of happiness together before the end of a furlough. Later the two, separated by five thousand miles of ocean, suffer doubts, loneliness, misunder-

standing. Letters aren't enough or don't come when they are most needed. Much later there may be a reunion of two different persons—older and changed—who aren't able to regain happiness and make a success of their marriage.

For many couples military service or war work makes some separation inevitable. A couple living apart may fail to establish the normal bonds of life together. Or they may discover, when the separation is over, that their idealizations of each other while apart bear slight resemblance to reality. They find themselves strangers to each other. They fail to make the adjustments and concessions and sacrifices necessary to successful marriage either in war or peacetimes.

The separation of marriage partners violates hopes and expectations that have been built up over the years. Many of the million or more Army wives wage a grim fight against separation. Some sense the coming of personality changes in their husbands as a result of Army life. Many try either to combat these changes or to keep in tune with them by following from camp to camp throughout the length and breadth of the country. In doing so they accept the inconveniences of wartime travel and add to the load on transportation. Sometimes officers are generous in permitting soldiers evening leave to go to some rooming house or hotel which to a wartime family is a temporary home. Frequently wives accept unsuitable employment for the sake of being near their husbands. On the West Coast there are areas where, despite high wartime wage standards, the competition of Army wives for jobs has reduced wages to low levels.

In this war, as in other wars, the increase in marriages has been accompanied by a sharply rising birth rate. Nine months after the adoption of the Selective Service Act, the birth rate in the United States jumped 11 percent above its level of the preceding month. (Its increase a year earlier was only 2 percent.) In 1942 not far from three million children were born in the United States—nearly three hundred thousand more than in 1941. In general, wartimes are not good times for babies. Yet babies are born—in trailer camps,



in slums of war-production areas, and to wives who are following their soldier husbands as long as possible. Thousands of women want babies to help them bear the absence of their husbands. The optimism produced by seemingly favorable economic conditions plays a part both in attitudes toward getting married and in having children. For some, childbearing, like marriage, seems a wartime service.

The problems of war marriages are more complex when there are children. Many a husband must forego the joys of helping to bring up his own baby. Often an Army wife with children cannot

afford to keep a separate home. She is therefore obliged to live with her own parents or with those of her absent husband. In-laws do not have a perfect reputation for furthering marital harmony.

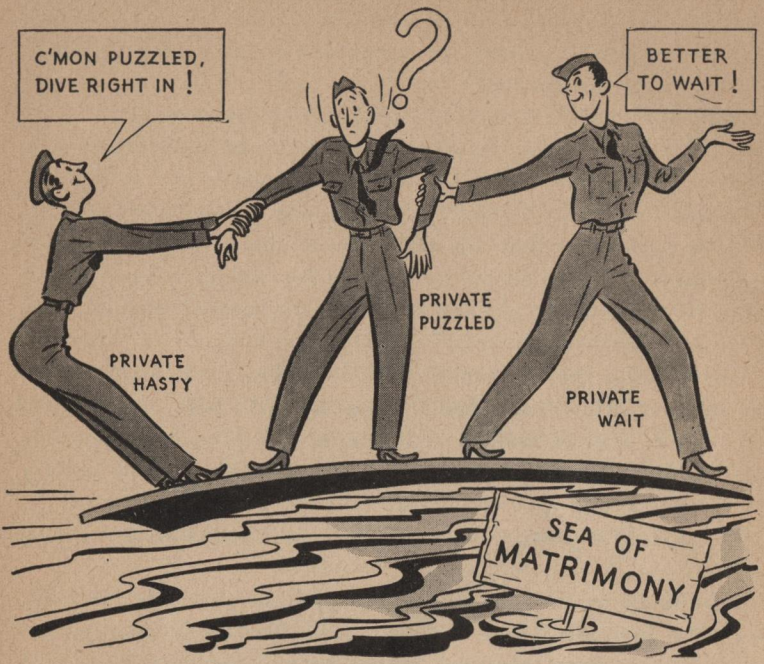
An Army wife living with her own parents frequently faces the old battle against parental domination. To be put back into the role of a child may seem particularly irksome after marriage, which traditionally means freedom from parental controls. It isn't always easy to follow a consistent program of child training under the eyes of the child's grandparents. Whether the Army wife lives as daughter or as paying guest under the family roof, friction of interests and attitudes is hard to avoid. Even when she finds it pleasant to live with her parents, the return to her former place of dependency may check the development of her maturity. And it may strengthen loyalties which later will clash with the expectations of her husband as to his place in the scheme of things.

Consciously or unconsciously, women deprived of their husbands look for balances or compensations. A child may consequently receive an overdose of affection and underdose of discipline. One can only speculate as to what the effect would be if an entire generation of children were reared exclusively by women. Successful marriage and the rearing of children is a joint not a divided responsibility.

SHOULD A SOLDIER WAIT?

"Refrain from hasty marriages contracted in patriotic fervor because your beau is going into the Army," Mrs. Roosevelt advises young women. But Fannie Hurst says, "A girl wins even when she loses, as long as she gets a husband, home, and heir. . . . Marry in haste and repent at leisure? But not to marry at all is to do more than repent. It is to carry through life an aching void."

Many unmarried men in service have to face the question, "Should a soldier wait?" There are plenty of friends ready to give advice and there is little agreement among them—unfortunately for the soldier who can't make up his mind and is unwilling to let



his girl friend make it up for him. No two cases are the same, yet most people feel confident in drawing upon their own personal experience when they offer advice as to whether a soldier should marry now or wait.

Pvt. Puzzled has started an argument between Pvt. Hasty and Pvt. Wait.

"A guy wearing a uniform who gets married is just plain nuts," says Pvt. Wait. "What's the use of being married when you can't see the girl more than maybe once a year?"

"Never mind him," says Pvt. Hasty. "You'll be a lot happier if you've got somebody who writes regularly and is waiting for you to come back. I know plenty of fellows who are having a swell time—every furlough another honeymoon. Nobody has a chance

to get fed up. No house to worry about—no dishes to wash. It's all romance. Eat out, dance, get a big kick out of it, and then look forward to the next furlough."

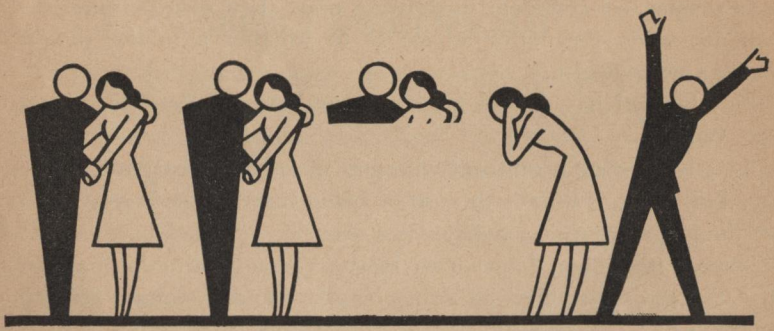
"Sure, it's all right to have a steady girl," asserts Pvt. Wait, "but what's the use of being married to her? If she really loves you, she'll wait without being tied down by marriage."

To this Pvt. Hasty replies, "Listen, young fellow, don't you believe for a moment that any girl, even if she is dumb enough to love you, is going to sit on ice waiting for you to get out of the Army. If you love the girl and she loves you, marry her quick, even if you just met her last week."

This brings a protest from Pvt. Wait. "How does the guy know he's in love? He doesn't really know the girl. Sure, they danced and took in a show, walked in the park, and got pretty chummy, but that doesn't mean anything. You can get into trouble quickly, but it takes a long time to get out."

Does Pvt. Wait have evidence to back up his doubts about hasty marriage?

If he had time to read the studies of hasty marriage he would find some interesting facts in them. The director of an organization in Los Angeles that gives advice on marriage problems made a study of 738 elopements. After five years, only 58 percent of these hasty marriages were rated as happy by close friends. The figure



58% OF ELOPED COUPLES ARE RATED HAPPY (AFTER 5 YEARS)

was about 10 percent lower than the average proportion of happy marriages.

Pvt. Hasty might, of course, suggest that perhaps parental opposition to these marriages, rather than haste, explains the difference. Two men in Chicago got 526 couples to give information about themselves. It was found that the couples whose courtship had lasted three or more years were more apt to claim that they were happily married than those who had married in haste. A psychologist in California who studied 792 couples came to the conclusion that an acquaintance before marriage of one to three years was favorable to married happiness. And in other studies it has been found that each of the following circumstances seems to have a connection with happiness in marriage: (1) acquaintance made in other ways than by "pickup"; (2) marriage in a church; and (3) marriage by priest, minister, or rabbi. So Pvt. Wait's disapproval of hasty marriages is backed by at least some evidence in favor of deliberate consideration and conventional ceremonies.

But Pvt. Hasty is not through yet. He still has a word for Pvt. Puzzled. "Look here," he says, "you're just an average guy. We're not talking about the fellow who runs for a marriage license just because he's got a few drinks under his belt. You know it's kind of hard for everybody to stick out this war. Listen, Wait, if Puzzled here gets married, he's got something real to fight for. His morale goes up. And the girl is going to feel that she's got a stake in the war, too. If a couple do their bit to get the thing over with, it brings them closer to each other. The Army and the home front are going to pull together when there is a connection on account of war marriages."

Pvt. Wait breaks in, "Where do you get this stuff about morale and pulling together in the war effort? It's just tough to be married and yet not really married. You expect a lot from marriage—living together, a home, kids, and that sort of thing. Maybe a wife doesn't want to hand over a good husband like Puzzled here to the Army or Navy. There are Army wives who do plenty of squawking about what they have to give up for the war. A lot of wives trail

along, crowd the trains, live in suitcases, and wait on table when they should settle down where they're needed and work in a war plant. Married men are always bucking for special leaves. I say it should be one thing at a time. War and marriage just don't mix. Get the war over with, then get married, and do it right."

"But," asserts Pvt. Hasty, "you've got to admit that marriage even in war makes a fellow settle down a bit. Army life doesn't turn out a batch of G. I. angels, but if a fellow has been brought up to have strict standards and wants to keep on that way, marriage helps."

Pvt. Wait interrupts, "You don't know what it's all about yet. Times have changed. With everybody on the move, marriage doesn't mean much for a lot of people and doesn't cramp their style. If a couple do take marriage pretty seriously and then step out on each other, it makes a worse mess when they get caught. Instead of having a good fight they probably get divorced."

"But marriage has got to continue," says Pvt. Hasty. "A country needs manpower. The Germans and the Japs are trying to boost their marriage and birth rates. Pvt. Puzzled and a lot of others have got to get married if we're to hold our own. With early marriage you can have more children, you can spread them out, and you can enjoy them before you get too old."

"That's not fair to children," says Pvt. Wait. "We're not fighting this war to breed cannon fodder. A kid has a right to a home and a father, not just a trailer camp and a worried mother."

Pvt. Hasty protests, "You're looking at just one side of it and you're trying to keep Puzzled from seeing anything but your cock-eyed views. Waiting for the one and only, even if you're engaged, is no picnic. Suppose the fellow and girl do stick it out and stay pretty true to each other. Perhaps they get together at last and find that both parties have changed. None of us are coming back from this war exactly the same kind of fellows. Maybe they won't want to get married then after all. Or maybe one of them does want the marriage but gets left flat, several years older, and with a lot of good chances passed up. Perhaps they keep a promise and

get married after the war in spite of a lot of doubts. If you don't marry when you feel like it, maybe you will end up with a lot of trouble."

Some evidence from the last war supports Pvt. Hasty. A study of divorce rates after World War I was made by a man named Hall. It showed an unusually large number of divorces for marriages contracted during the postwar years 1919 and 1920. There seems to be little evidence that the policy of waiting was a guaranty of wisdom and good judgment at the time when the marriages finally took place. Pvt. Wait might, of course, say that perhaps many of these divorces resulted from marriages based on hasty postwar courtships rather than from marriages that were postponed until after the war.

But Pvt. Wait has a more direct rebuttal, "It is plain nonsense to try to keep from growing apart by getting married. It's a lot worse to come back and find yourself a stranger to your wife than to just a girl friend. Sure, both can make mistakes and people can change and they can waste some good years. Being married doesn't help, though. It's all the harder to get free and then have to start looking for the right person."

"But being married does make a difference," says Pvt. Hasty. "There is a better chance to change together when you think of yourself as married. You try harder to be together, to keep the letters moving. Being married, there is more at stake and you really try to understand the other person's point of view."

Pvt. Wait again objects, "Sure, you try to make believe it's a nice normal marriage and you get into a jam about money. You think a soldier's allowance will support a baby when it really won't. You spend a lot of money together while on leave and start buying things just to make believe that you've got a home. A lot more is expected of you than if you were just engaged."

Pvt. Hasty replies, "That's a good idea, but it's put wrong. You spend a lot less money getting married in wartime than if you waited for peace. You don't expect as much. You get used to starting in a small way, and people don't expect you to put on

dog and to have what everybody else has. Anyway, this money business is overrated. It's the way people feel about each other that really counts."

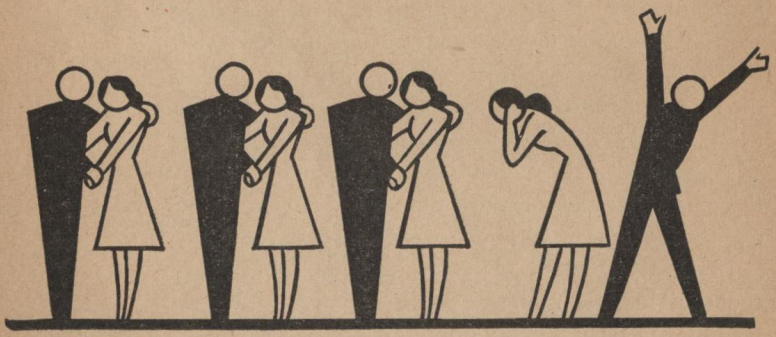
Here Pvt. Hasty could find experts who would agree with him. The Chicago psychologists, Burgess and Cottrell, and the California psychologist, Terman, agreed that among the many married couples they studied, money troubles played a surprisingly small part in producing marital unhappiness.

So Pvt. Wait winds up the argument, "Look here, Hasty, I can't spend all day explaining things to you. Maybe it depends on the kind of guy that Puzzled is and the kind of girl who gave him the picture that he carries around."

MUST LOVE BE BLIND?

Perhaps this parting shot of Pvt. Wait comes nearer the truth of the matter than he himself realizes.

Given the right couple, a war marriage or almost any other kind of marriage can be made to work. Investigators have questioned thousands of Americans about their happiness in marriage or have obtained ratings from close friends of the couples. Their findings agree pretty closely. About three-fourths of the couples report



¾ OF ALL MARRIAGES ARE RATED HAPPY

themselves happy or act in such manner that they convince their friends that they are happy. Were they just lucky or is it possible that judgment is involved? And can that judgment be improved by knowing about the experiences of others, and making use of that knowledge? It is a good guess that the happily married are more successful in their marriages than if their mates had been selected by drawing names out of a hat.

There is no absolute science of mate selection. Nevertheless, some people who are modest enough about their ability to pick an automobile or a washing machine are sure that they know all about picking a good wife or a good husband. When they make recommendations to others, they do so in terms of their own personal taste and experience. Someone has said that a man tells all he knows in two hours and then starts talking about women. Women are probably not much better informed about the other half of the human race than men are. A human being is infinitely more complicated than a washing machine. Two human beings in relation to each other make a metropolitan telephone system seem as simple as a spool of thread.

WHAT DO THE BEST ADVISERS SAY?

Even if there is no science of mate selection controlling men and women, doctors, psychologists, sociologists, social workers, statisticians, and other supposedly learned folk have been observing and studying courtship and marriage with great care. In the light of all their studies, here are some suggestions they would give Pvt. Puzzled:

1. Try to have a fairly wide range of acquaintance with the opposite sex. Many a man has married the first woman who took an interest in him, because he didn't quite realize that there were other women in the world. The only way to judge a person is by comparison. A man's occupation or location may limit his opportunities to meet girls. Shyness may tie his tongue. Fortunately mixed recreational groups and increased initiative on the part of

FIND OUT WHAT MAKES HER TICK



BUT DON'T TRY TO CHANGE HER

girls offer a wider range of contact for those who have the good judgment to make full use of them.

2. Know the girl. The best advisers recommend knowing what's behind the cosmetics and under the hair-do. Personalities are on parade in courtship. It is a time for putting on one's best clothes and best manners. Often the two persons share a very limited variety of experiences.

It is important to distinguish between a person who loves and one who loves to be loved. A smile may be an invitation to join a self-founded admiration society.

Here are some questions to consider: Is the girl hopelessly tied by family bonds and loyalties? Does she like you for yourself or because you resemble in some insignificant way a father or a brother? Are you being collected as a scalp to be waved in triumph before friends?

3. The ancient warning, "Know Thyself," is repeated with new emphasis by advisers on marriage. Are you romantic or realistic? If you lie awake at night explaining to yourself how you can do without her, you may be really involved. If you're on the rebound, filled with loneliness, and smarting with wounded pride, maybe you should be locked up until you have sense enough to be trusted at large among the opposite sex.

What is your relative value in the marriage market? You may have marked yourself too high or you may have put yourself on the bargain counter. Are you worthy of the girl? Your best friend won't tell you. If you want advice, ask the girl's sharpest critic. She may tell you something worth learning.

Are you sure you don't want the girl just to keep somebody else from getting her? Do you want her for herself or because nobody else is in the picture at the moment? Are you just tired of trying to make up your mind? Is it just that you want to get the matter settled once and for all?

4. Knowing the girl is closely tied up with the question of knowing what she wants in marriage, not just what she says she wants. There are all sorts of possibilities that do not appear on the surface. Per-

haps she subconsciously wants somebody to boss around. Possibly she wants to be a mother to a man. Perhaps her idea is to reform you after marriage and shape you into the kind of person that she really wants.

There is much evidence that what a person wants in marriage is the result of childhood experience in his own family. Marriage is a continuation of family life, and most people want to carry on what they have found satisfactory in their own family, and to make good what has been unsatisfactory or lacking.

If a girl likes certain qualities in her father, she may want to have them in a husband. Woe to the man who forgets an anniversary if his wife's father has a good memory for such things! Or she may want her husband to avoid the qualities or characteristics which she found unsatisfactory in her father. If she has chafed under strict control, she may be looking for the chance to do a little bossing on her own account. If she has felt insecure and unloved, she may have built up a tremendous appetite for affection. On the other hand, if she has come from an affectionate family, she may expect affection as a matter of course. Perhaps a girl has resented her mother's hard lot and is eager to play a very different role in her own marriage drama. One might expect a thrifty wife to come from a poor home, but the experience of poverty may have bred dreams of fur coats.

It is probable that you can learn more about what a girl wants in her own marriage by investigating her likes and dislikes in her own family than in any other way.

5. Know what you want in marriage. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Very likely you too have been just as much influenced by family experience in childhood. If your love and approval for your mother were strong and unqualified, you may want a girl "just like the girl who married dear old Dad." If you have been dominated, you may be ready for your turn at ruling the roost. If you have felt inferior in your family group, you may be drawn to somebody who makes you feel that you are a great big handsome wonderful fellow. If you had an adoring younger

sister whose pigtails you could pull at will, you may want a wife who can accept your particular kind of joking.

Don't bank on your ability to change the girl. Many a husband has found to his sorrow that he has as little success in reforming his wife's personality as she in changing his.

6. Compare family backgrounds. It follows from what has been said about the wish to perpetuate family experience that two persons' desires are involved. It is not just a question of what the girl wants or what you want, but of what you both want—of adjusting expectations that in both cases are rooted in family experience. There may be a clash of such expectations because of different religious or nationality backgrounds. The demands of an only child, though not unreasonable, may still not dovetail with those of a person reared in a large family. A happy-go-lucky family life has its virtues, but a member of a family accustomed to that kind of life may not adjust readily in marriage to a person reared in a home marked by formality and discipline.

7. Know the girl's parents before they become your parents-in-law. This may not be easy, for they may be placed on exhibition,



MEET THE GIRL'S PARENTS . . . STUDY THEM!

best foot forward. In the romantic tradition of marriage, they may not seem to count, but generally they do at least appear upon the scene. In a sense you marry them in order to get the girl. All comic-strip ideas aside, parents-in-law are important because they have claims and emotional demands to make upon their children. From what has been said it follows that your father-in-law may be the kind of person you are *supposed* to be. If you don't like that kind of person or can't be that kind of person, it may be just too bad.

Furthermore, the girl's parents give some idea of what she now is or is going to become. By breeding and upbringing she is a product of her parents. Suppose the mother at fifty is silly and kittenish. The daughter has a girlish gaiety suitable to one who is young and pretty, but later on will she be like her mother? Suppose the mother at fifty is a bore—the daughter may have a better start than you realize, with only some twenty-five years to go. Look at the girl's parents for a dim preview of the future. Remember that the personalities of both parents are interwoven under the girl's skin. She may resemble them. She may exert herself to avoid resemblance. She may carry within her the strain of their disagreements and conflicts.

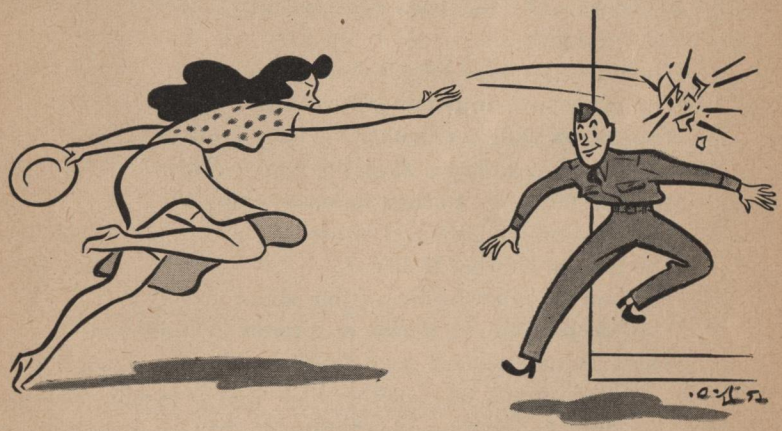
If it is important for the man to know the girl's parents, it is perhaps even more important for the girl to know his parents, particularly his mother. Generally he fits in better with her parents than she does with his.

8. Think in terms of growth and change. Are you and the girl likely to grow and change together—or at different rates and in separate ways? How would the girl react to motherhood? And how would you react to the changes that age, work, and children bring to family life? Many a boy with the picture of a pin-up girl over his bunk would do well to take an occasional look at a bevy of Ziegfeld girls twenty years after their day of glory. While on the subject of change, it may be worth while to remember that twenty years from now your uniform probably won't fit and your hair won't need parting.

9. Courtship should be regarded as a time for getting genuinely acquainted, for testing your ability to make adjustments, and for learning about the personality traits that will be brought together in the marriage. It is a time for anticipating the basic problems of marriage and for reaching agreements on such questions as having children, the handling of family finances, church affiliation and attendance, and whether the wife should work after marriage. If courtship really serves such purposes, it will make possible some check on compatibility. Most studies seem to indicate that sexual intercourse before marriage is unfavorable to marriage success.

It is generally agreed that common interests are important and that people should try to find out before marriage the degree to which interests can be enjoyably shared. It is much harder to work together than to play together. Comradeship in work gives more promise of happiness in marriage than comradeship in recreations which would be enjoyable even with an otherwise unsatisfactory companion.

Some advisers recommend a quarrel now and then. It is human, it helps to clear the air, and it may test a couple's ability to adjust conflicts of interest and will. The person who will never admit that



RECOMMENDED: A GOOD FIGHT (NOW AND THEN)

he or she is in the wrong is a poor prospect as a marriage partner. The three hardest words to pronounce in any language are, "I was wrong."

10. Consider the experience of others. It would seem to be as important to be able to predict success or failure in marriage as it is to predict a boom in the stock market or the risks of sickness or accident. A happy marriage has greater value than wealth; and family conflict may be more devastating in its effects than tuberculosis or typhoid. The difficulty is that nobody is wise enough to understand fully the complexities of relations between men and women. The best way out, therefore, is a careful pooling of experience.

The most systematic work toward this objective has been done by Terman, who succeeded in getting hundreds of married couples to cooperate with him. He tested their personalities, explored their family backgrounds, and got husbands and wives to tell frankly how they felt about each other.

Terman's study brought out ten qualifications which seem to offer the soundest basis for predicting happiness in marriage. All ten, listed below in the order of their importance, can be known before marriage. On the basis of this study, other things being equal, look for a girl:

1. Whose parents were happily married
2. Who was happy in childhood
3. Who got on with her mother
4. Who experienced home discipline that was firm but not harsh
5. Who was strongly attached to her mother
6. Who was strongly attached to her father
7. Who got on with her father
8. Who had parents who were frank about sex
9. Who was not punished often or severely in childhood
10. Whose attitude toward sex is free from disgust or aversion

With all this in mind, take another look at your possible parents-in-law, for their happiness and adjustment may be important to you. That is the verdict of most studies of marriage.

AN OVERSEAS SITUATION

The hazards of war marriages are apparently multiplied in the cases of overseas marriages of military personnel to foreigners. A careful observer who studied the problems of such marriages during the last war estimates that at least half of them turned out to be failures.

The basic problems are of course those of adjustment, with ordinary difficulties complicated by all the differences of environment and custom and nationality or race. But there are also practical tangles, especially in the matter of couples getting together later in the United States. During war, officers and men are subject to quick changes of station and can't take their wives with them from a foreign country; and, when the war is over, soldiers (unless they happened to enlist overseas) will be returned to the United States for discharge and may be obliged to leave their wives behind. In the crowded months after the war, even if money is available for travel expenses, wives and children left in foreign countries are not likely to find it easy to get ship passage. Sometimes a foreign wife of a soldier has come to the United States to live with strange in-laws in unfamiliar surroundings—at best a hard experience of adjustment and, if her husband fails to return from the war, a tragic dilemma. It should be added that mixed marriages of certain kinds are outlawed in many states; that American consular officials can refuse a visa for a wife to enter the United States if in their judgment she is likely to become a public charge; and that foreign husbands of American citizens can enter the United States only under quota.

MAKING A SUCCESS OF WAR MARRIAGE

How do some couples make a go of marriage under war conditions? Keeping busy in war work seems to help. If the husband is in the Army and his wife in a war plant, they won't have much time to brood over the ill fate that separates them or to blame each

other for circumstances beyond their control. They are both doing what they can to win the war and shorten the time of their separation. Their shared concern establishes a common bond in relation to the very war which separates them.

Another source of strength in meeting the problems of separation is the sense of comradeship with many others who are having similar experiences and deprivations. Army wives have banded together in various ways for moral support. The married man in the Army will not forget that one out of every three American soldiers is facing a domestic problem similar to his own.

Intensive letter writing can be of value in helping a couple separated by the war to hold on to each other and to keep their marriage vital. Newsy letters telling of the little events that have happened and of the feelings of the writers toward them result in a sharing of day-by-day experience. This helps to keep the couple close to each other and to understand how each is being changed.

Finally, there is reason to believe that family morale, like any other kind of morale, is based on hope. Couples who plan realistically for their married life in peacetime minimize troubles brought on by war. Planning for children is important. One study of marriage indicated that the happiest couples are those who want but do not yet have children.

What are some of the timeless, general conditions of success in marriage? In particular, what are the conditions that can to some extent be influenced by the conscious effort of couples to make their marriages succeed?

Couples have to pay a price for marriage success. No two persons enjoy a complete identity of purpose. Some effort, some compromise, therefore, has to be made—and made from the beginning. A good start in marriage may lead to growth of satisfaction and contentment.

It is not unreasonable to believe that children help to make marriage a success. The fact that divorced couples have fewer children does not, of course, make it certain that these couples would have been happily married if they had had more children. But no one



can deny that children help to educate parents into maturity, provide a common interest, and strengthen the incentive to work for a good marital adjustment.

Someone has said that a wife is a person who sticks by you in trouble you wouldn't have had if you hadn't married her. Yet even trouble may be a bond that holds a home together.

Another trait generally favorable to success in marriage is what might be called sociability. The good mixers, the participants in group activities, those who take an interest in others, are likely to make successful wives and husbands. Ability to make friends is not created by a mere act of will, but can be cultivated. Common friends and skill in the art of friendship help to make a go of marriage. As the more romantic phase passes, the successful marriage develops the quality of an intimate friendship.

Another favorable characteristic is honesty. Those who are honest with their mates, with themselves, and with the world are more likely to have successful marriages than those who are not. Remember, however, that a certain kind of honesty is the same as tactlessness. While there is much to be said for honesty about money matters and about activities and outlook on life, there is perhaps little gain in the expression of frank disapproval of your wife's nose, the size of her feet, or her I. Q. After all, very little can be done about these matters. It may be wise to consider whether or not a constructive change is possible, and whether the change, if made, is worth the risk of hurt feelings and misunderstanding. Truth is sometimes bitter medicine which must be handled with discretion.

The "fifty-fifty" marriage, the kind in which neither husband nor wife orders the other around but in which they share equal authority and parallel responsibility, seems to have the best chance of success. There are persons who like to be bossed and others who enjoy bossing. If such individuals happen to pair off, the marriage may be a success. But in general American women are not by temperament or by training inclined to play the role of door mat in marriage any more than American men.

In fact, a couple's attitude toward equality in marriage relationship may be as important as the actual division of authority and responsibility between them. One recent study showed that husbands opposed to rights for women were somewhat less likely to be happily married than those more tolerant on the subject of equal rights and responsibilities for women. Many happily married couples assert that a "fifty-fifty" meeting is not enough—that each must be ready to go more than half way and provide, in a "sixty-sixty" arrangement, a wide area for compromise.

Finally, mature people are more likely than others to make a go of marriage. They are not necessarily people who were born a goodly number of years ago. There are grown-up babies walking around disguised as adults by graying hair and wrinkling skin. Grown men are sometimes still tied to their mothers' apron strings. Some fading women talk of "Daddy," expect indulgent adoration,



IT'S O.K. DARLING . . .

and want somebody else to shoulder their share of work and responsibility. People in their thirties may still at heart be adolescents seeking thrills, craving admiration, and pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of unchanging romantic love.

Throughout the centuries the human race has commonly regarded marriage as a symbol of maturity. When the symbol corresponds to reality, the chances of making a success of marriage are best.

To the Leader

How to Use This Pamphlet

Type of discussion. The subject of war marriages as presented in this pamphlet may be handled effectively in one of three types of discussion: (1) informal discussion, (2) panel discussion, (3) debate. For the techniques of organizing and conducting these forms of discussion, refer to *Guide for Discussion Leaders* in the series of Education Manuals of which the present pamphlet is one.

Charts. Whichever form of discussion you select, reproduce the charts given in the text for use with your group. It does not matter if the reproductions are rough, but they should be of sufficiently large size to be legible to the person who sits farthest from them. Put them up around the room or fasten them to a blackboard or other stand that may be available. Your purpose is to furnish basic facts quickly and effectively.

Mixed group. Making a success of marriage in wartime is especially suitable for discussion by a group of both men and women. The points of view of both will increase the value of the thought given this problem by members of the group.

Reading by group members. Although this pamphlet appears to be directed primarily to the leader, it is also written for the general reader. You may find it both stimulating to discussion and practical to place one or more copies in the library or other reading room for preliminary or follow-up reading by group members. If you do this, make appropriate announcements about it. Another suggestion

is that you ask the librarian to set aside a shelf for any available books on the subject of marriage. Draw attention to this shelf with a placard, perhaps worded as follows: Discussion Group Reading—Can War Marriages Be Made To Work?

Informal discussion. Your five-minute introduction should sketch quickly the reasons for the timeliness of the subject: the rapid increase in marriage rate in wartime; many hasty and ill-considered marriages leading to unhappiness; the frankly puzzling questions of whether it is right to marry in the face of anticipated long separation or to postpone marriage until after the war. (See pp. 3–8.) Somewhere in your introduction you should also define war marriage. (See pp. 1–5.) Your opening question should be one that points to an important and challenging issue: Should marriage be postponed in wartime? On what basis can a man reasonably expect a girl to wait for him until after the war?

Below are given a number of questions that may be helpful, in stimulating discussion if it lags. They are grouped in the order in which they might well be raised, under three main lines of inquiry: (1) the reasons why men and women decide on a hurried marriage or on postponing marriage in the face of long separation afterward; (2) predicting success in marriage; and (3) making a success of marriage in wartime. If you ask each of four or five individuals in advance of the meeting to ask one of these questions, you will have their assistance in getting the discussion off to a good start.

Factors in war marriage. What is a war marriage? Is it simply marriage in wartime? What are the human motives that cause hasty marriages in wartime? By what special dangers may the success of marriage in wartime be threatened? Should marriage be postponed because of the war? To what extent has the United States marriage rate increased since adoption of the Selective Service Act? (See pp. 3–14.)

Predicting success. How can the success of the marriage of a specific couple be predicted? What are the chances of married happiness after short acquaintance? Is there a science of mate selection? If not, why not? What suggestions have been made on

how to select a life companion wisely? What qualifications appear to offer a sound basis for predicting success in marriage? Are marriages contracted overseas with foreign-born individuals subject to special dangers? (See pp. 15–23.)

Making a success. Once contracted how can marriage be made successful? Are there suggestions that apply particularly to married couples living under wartime conditions? What about children—do they help or hinder? Do the personalities of marriage partners change during long separations? Should a wife who is separated from her husband live with her parents or her in-laws? Can any two people make a success of marriage if they try hard enough? (See pp. 5–8 and 23–28.)

Panel discussion. The material suggested for informal discussion is just as appropriate for panel discussion. You can ask the panel to plan their discussion around the same three main lines of inquiry, using the same questions. Your five-minute introduction would be the same.

An ingenious and effective variant of panel discussion is a dramatization of a G. I. argument of which the chief actors are Pvts. Hasty and Wait. (See pp. 8–15.) The other members of the panel contribute their share of the discussion as friends and supporters of Hasty and Wait. At the conclusion of the dramatization, the "cast" serves as a board of experts to answer questions from the floor.

Debate. If the debate form is used, one good phrasing for the subject is: Resolved that young people should postpone marriage until after the war. Be sure to arrange for a question period following the debate itself. (See *Guide for Discussion Leaders,* section IV, 6.)

Guide for Discussion Leaders. This guide, which has been referred to above, should be in your hands. It has been distributed with this and other pamphlets of this series. It describes the objectives of voluntary off-duty discussion, suggests ways of interesting personnel in this phase of education, and tells how to conduct informal discussions, panel discussions, forums, symposiums, and debates.

Some Ideas for a Library Shelf on War Marriages

MODERN MARRIAGE: A HANDBOOK FOR MEN. By Paul Popenoe. Published by Macmillan and Company, 60 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y. (1940). Includes an extensive list of references on marriage.

WAR, BABIES, AND THE FUTURE. By William Fielding Ogburn. No. 63 of *Public Affairs Pamphlets,* published by Public Affairs Committee, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y. (1943).

WILL WAR MARRIAGES WORK? Published in *Reader's Digest,* volume 41, no. 247, pp. 14–18 (November 1942). Condensed from "America's Town Meeting of the Air."

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS. By Ada Arlitt. Published by McGraw-Hill Book Company, 330 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. (1942).

BOY MEETS GIRL IN WARTIME. Edited by Janet F. Nelson. Published by American Social Hygiene Association, 1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y. (1943).

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